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Or, Miscellany of

RELIGIOUS, INSTRUCTIVE, AND ENTERTAINING KNOWLEDGE.

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LETTERS FROM BELGIUM.

[Continued from page 125.]

LETTER VI.

Belgium, October, 1842.

I PROPOSED speaking to you of confession, before introducing you to the Mass as a Sacrament, because we do not presume to receive the communion of the Body and Blood of Christ without previously confessing. Before, therefore, I acquaint you with the circumstances of our communion, it seems natural to show you the means we use to prepare for it, of which means confession is the most important.

Most Protestants consider confession one of the greatest burdens of the Roman Catholic religion, and pity with all their hearts "poor Catholics who are obliged to confess to their Priests." Whereas, it is to us the source of truest consolation, the means of the sweetest repose of heart, and the channel of that "peace" which St. Paul invokes, the "peace of God which passeth all understanding."

To those who live unrighteously of course confession is a burden, yet even for these it is not oppressive, as strangers suppose it to be, especially unrighteous strangers, who live under the liberty of their own will, and rejoice in having no check they need put upon it. But of this number is not the multitude of England's devoutly intentioned children. To these the power and means of confessing would open a new world of holy joy, of strength, of advancement in spiritual life, of which now, in their solitary strivings after holiness, they can conceive not even a faint idea. To comprehend its super-human influence over the heart is impossible to any but a child of that holy Mother, who has preserved this precious gift of the Spouse intact.

Confession forms one part of a sacrament, the sacrament of Penance, of which contrition and satisfaction are the remaining two.

You are accustomed to consider two sacraments only, but we hold seven institutions of our Lord as sacraments, of which penance is one.

We believe in penance as a sacrament, because it has all the requisites of a sacrament; believing, as your Church also teaches, the meaning of the word sacrament to be, that it is

I. An outward and visible sign

II. Of an inward and spiritual grace, given unto us; and that it was,

III. Ordained by Christ Himself.

There are many sorts of external signs; of these God has chosen some to mark the reception of His grace. The washing with water is the external sign of the grace received in baptism.

The penitent confessing his sin with contrition of heart, the Priest receiving that confession, and giving absolution, form the outward sign of the sacrament of penance:

Being "the means whereby" the penitent receives "grace," "and a pledge to assure him thereof." That it was ordained by Christ.	Outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, ordained by Christ Himself.

As a member of the Church of England, it is unnecessary to remind you, because you acknowledge, as we do, the two essential parts of the sacrament of penance, confession, and contrition. Perhaps you have never reflected on this, as it is not brought before your notice in your catechism, or by any regular teaching. If you will, however, turn to the visitation of the sick, in the Book of Common Prayer, you will find directions given to the "Priest" to "move the sick person to make a special confession of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter. After which confession the Priest shall absolve him."

The form of absolution in your church is: "Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power to his church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in Him, of his great mercy forgive thee thine offences: and by his authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

The substance of our absolution is exactly the same. The words are: "May our Lord Jesus Christ, who is our High-Priest, by his most tender mercy absolve thee: and by his authority committed to me, though unworthy, I absolve thee from thy sins. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

Nov. 18.—I have been sadly interrupted in my pleasant occupation of writing to you by various occurrences. During the delay, the whole parish has been to confess, and many a parish besides in this wholly Catholic land; as it is usual for most persons to confess at the feast of All Saints, or during the week which follows. My attention has been constantly called, therefore, to my work of giving you an account of confession, and I have been vexed at not being able to write down what I felt, at the moment it was fresh in my mind, while watching our piously

educated people come day after day in their turn to present themselves at the confessional. Had you been here to witness their quiet, sincere devotion, it would not have been necessary for me to write any thing for you, for you would have been convinced of the real advantage of this, to them, blessed sacrament, in seeing the fruits it produces.

My thoughts have been called again this week to my subject—confession. This morning when I entered the church, there stood two long, very long rows of chairs, stretching across the church from the confessional, which I recollected were placed there for a very important division of our community, namely, the children, who had been advertised from the pulpit on Sunday, that they were all to come to confess this week. The boys one day, and the girls the next.

Four times in the year are these marble-playing, top-spinning, race-hopping, merry-makers, called upon to lay aside their frolic and fun, and to examine their large consciences, preparatory to confession, to which they are exhorted in the catechism the Sunday previous.

Very serious indeed "Mynheer Pastor" made them look last Sunday, while he reminded them that children are answerable before God for the sins they commit, as well as grown-up men and women; and that Jesus Christ will not have them to come and live with Him in heaven, unless they repent and leave off their sins, and seek grace to lead good lives by the means He has appointed for receiving that grace—that is, by confession. He simply explained to them the nature of confession, and told them how Jesus Christ gave power to his Priests to forgive sin, and that if they confess their sins with contrition of heart, God will forgive them by his mouth. But that if *he* cannot forgive them for want of the contrition and resolutions of amendment necessary for receiving absolution, neither will God forgive them; for our Lord has said, "whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained."

He chose from their daily devotions the ten commandments as his text for examination for confession, and going over them very plainly, applied them to the young consciences he was addressing. Asking general questions thus: "First commandment. Have you shown that you love God with all your heart? What is it to love God? *To serve him.* What is it to serve God? To serve; what is it to serve? how does a servant serve his master? By obeying him, and working for him from early morning to late evening; and during the night if required. Have you shown that you love God with all your heart, by serving and obeying Him thus diligently? Have you served him by glorifying Him the very first thing you have done on opening your eyes on a morning? Have you said, 'Glory be to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Amen.' Have you dressed yourself without idling, and carefully prayed your morning prayers? Have you served God by blessing Him before you began your breakfast, and thanked Him when you had finished? or have you neglected all or any of these morning duties? How often? Think it well over. Have you shown you loved God with all your heart by going quietly to church, and hearing Mass with earnest devotion? Have you thought of what you had to pray for during the Mass, and have you offered the Holy Sacrifice with that intention? Have you thought over the four ends to which the Mass is offered? Have you prayed with your heart and with your mind, or have your lips only moved? Have you afterwards gone to school, and been diligent and obedient to learn all that was taught you? or have you wasted your time in idle play or careless thoughts? Have you returned home quickly, or have you played by the way, because you knew you must do something to help your mother at home? How often have you done this? Think it well over. Have you prayed before you dined, and after? Have you played honestly, or have you deceived in your play? Have you quarrelled with, or struck any one? Have you carefully examined your conscience every evening? and thought over the sins, or faults, or bad habits your confessor told you to watch against in your last confession? Have you prayed very diligently every evening, or have you not begun in time to prevent your being too tired or sleepy to pray well?"

Going thus simply through the other commandments, he finished with an exhortation to them to pray for the grace of the Holy Spirit to enlighten their minds, and awaken their memory while they examined themselves for confession, and, above all, to ask for grace to excite true contrition in their hearts, and a sincere purpose to overcome or forsake the sins they were guilty of.

Thus prepared, and the chairs for their reception being prepared also, as I have said, began to be heard soon after I entered the church, the clatter of young wooden shoes, which never set so tight to the feet as older ones; come what may of scolding for making a noise, these young wooden shoes do dearly delight in slipping up and down at every step, and making thereby, for their owners' ears, the most heart-cheering music on the stone pavement of the church, and who are thus a little comforted for the sad prospect they have before them, of actually sitting still during the confession. As still they must sit; no one would dare to move an eye-brow while confession was going on, not even wooden shoes would be excused for slipping off then. Having reached their chairs, their Pastor came quickly into the confessional; they were in an instant on their knees to await their turn, which came to one after another, each being occupied in the confessional a quarter of an hour, or less or more, as might be. At eight o'clock was the Mass at which they remained; and no one would have known a child was in the church, so entirely quiet and orderly did they behave. After the Mass the business of confession went on. I believe I have told you it is usual to be in the church for private devotion before and after the Mass; we thus were present during a considerable part of the confessional business this morning.

Children are trained to come to the confessional from the age of seven years; they may come younger if the parents like to send them; but at seven years the parents are obliged to allow them to come to catechism and confession. Few wait for this, and

many very young children adorn our churches with their infant devotion. They continue to come to confession every three months, till they celebrate their first communion, which they may do at the age of eleven or twelve years, if found sufficiently intelligent, after a very long and diligent preparation, of which I will speak in its turn. It is only, therefore, the confession of very young children I am describing.

No Christian but must feel his heart open at seeing these little creatures come one by one from the confessional, and kneeling on the step of the Altar, raise his tiny hands and recite the prayers which have been indicated to him by his Spiritual Guide. There is an expression of thoughtfulness and sincere devotion on each young countenance, which no other means but the solemnity of the confessional can produce. This thoughtfulness and devotion of heart to God are carried out into the life of our children, not rendering them less merry, or less apt to receive all worldly instruction their position requires, or less diligent in labour, but sanctifying all their mirth, and all their learning, and all their employment. Leading them to watch over their thoughts, and words, and actions, in a way which is very beautiful to experience, by any one who will take the trouble to watch them closely. I love to watch them at their play, or in their houses assisting their parents, or when at their devotions in the churches; being certain to see some new proof of their spiritual education being brought out into action, even in the most trifling things. One such little anecdote I will venture to relate, which, though a mere trifle, certainly was exactly in keeping with the character of our children. They often have little pictures given to them in the confessional, of which they make great value; collect them into books, or paste them on cards. These are examined over and over, and as they are prints of Holy Scripture, or Church History, the Life of Christ, the Parables, &c., which they have explained to them in the catechisms, these pictures furnish to them a treasure of religious knowledge, which renders many a winter evening profitable and agreeable. There is nothing, therefore, they value so much as a religious picture, especially one "about the sweet Jesus" as they often fondly call Him. I was attracted towards one little fellow, whose eye glistened with delight as he passed from the confessional with a picture in his hand, representing something his heart beat with joy at possessing, I could see. He knelt down, placed his picture on the altar-step beside him, and prepared to pray. But his head turned to take a short peep at his tempting treasure. The temptation became stronger at a second peep. He was becoming distracted from his prayers. "Alas! for my little friend," I said, "his prayers will be wholly unthought of, and they are the prayers of the confessional." The same thought no doubt came to him also, for on a sudden recollecting himself, by one bold effort he placed himself in such a position, that he could not see his picture. The hands were re-nerved, upraised with firmness, the eye fixed upward, the prayers evidently recommenced, and the picture and its tempting beauty quite laid in rest till his serious duty of praying was accomplished.

Monday, Dec. 13.—Nearly a month fled since I last wrote. I have not been able to write a syllable for you, other letters from England demanding, like you, information on Catholic subjects too pressing to be slighted, obliged me to defer my letter for you. It is very cheering to me to see this thirst for every thing Catholic so steadily increasing.

Since I last wrote for you our summer holidays have quite passed away, with their minor fêtes, octaves, and pleasantly diversified devotions, and the Catholic year has begun with Advent, bringing with it our real business, the direct contemplation of Christ in his human life. Beginning with the preparation for the commemoration of His Birth, we are carried on through His Adorable Passion to His Resurrection, Ascension, and the Descent of the Holy Spirit. This period embraces all our great and grand festivals, and demands our deepest attention, to which we are aroused by every invention of arrangement on the part of our provident Mother. Had I time I would carry you with us through each awakening service, and suitable duty, but my other occupations leave me at liberty to do this in part only. Beginning with Advent Sunday, I may tell you that we are warned among other things by the purple vestments of the Priests, and the decorations of the same colour about our altars, that the first duty of preparing to receive our infant Saviour is repentance of our sins. Crying to us from the desert, like the voice of the Holy Baptist, and urging us to prepare the way of the Lord. Every thing takes a serious, earnest tone. On Advent Sunday, and the Saturday preceding, the confessionals are surrounded with penitents, preparatory to receiving the most Blessed Sacrament on the Sunday, or some early day after. It is very beautiful to see our pious villagers, full of occupation as they are, arranging their various duties, in order to have time on the Saturday afternoon to go to the church to confess, all neatly attired in clean week-day clothing. Or if prevented going on the Saturday, or being obliged to return without confessing, as is frequently the case, there being too many for all to be attended to, they think it no task to rise long before day on the Sunday morning, to attend the tribunal of penitence. The pastor in winter enters the church at five on such days, and frequently finds many at the door awaiting his arrival. The church is partially lighted, but not more than enough to shed a holy solemnity on every thing around. The deep silence, the devotional attitude of all present, most kneeling on the ground, many with their hands upraised, the thoughtful, serious countenances of those who are about to confess, and the holy joy of others over whom has been pronounced the peace-giving words, "I absolve thee from all thy sins," render the house of God at the time of confession a sanctuary, on every pillar of which is written, "Holiness to the Lord."

I cannot ask of you to try to imagine the consolation and peace of mind produced by confession, from the assurance that sin is really and actually forgiven

in the sacrament of penance, by the absolution pronounced by the Priest. You could not realize these by any force of imagination, they must be experienced to be understood, and they must be experienced as a Roman Catholic experiences them, that is, by a "*lively* faith" in the power left by Christ to his clergy to forgive sins. It is one thing to hold a doctrine darkly and distantly, as the established Church of England holds this doctrine of the power of her clergy to forgive the sin confessed to them, and quite another to have it brought home to our every-day feelings and practice. It is one thing to know darkly and distantly that there is pardon to be obtained on the sick or dying bed "if the conscience be troubled with any weighty matter," and quite another to have that pardon offered to us at any moment of our life, when the body is strong and in health, but the soul is sick and languishing, not with a "weighty matter," the only title by which she may claim to ask for pardon, according to the usage of the church establishment of England, but sick and languishing with the burden of daily life of those infirmities which need constant healing, of "the sin which does so easily beset us," weighing down the spirit, and vexing it by its frequent recurrence, after having again and again striven for its destruction. Against this daily sickness of soul the church of Rome has provided by her arrangements for confession, a powerful medicine, a balm, "the balm of Gilead," with the skilful hand of the "physician" ever by, to apply it to the "hurt" of the daughter of the "people" of Jehovah.

Whatever may have been said, or may still be said, against these arrangements, the proof of the church's wisdom in all her discipline of the confessional is in its suitableness to the necessities of the human heart, realized to each individual Roman Catholic, who is sincere in his religion. As in the laws of nature two bodies having a natural affinity for each other, unite when brought in contact, so does the human understanding of the Roman Catholic close with the arrangements for confession, without any question; because he feels they alone supply the "aching void" of his soul.

But though it would be difficult for you to comprehend the peace and joy which lightens up the countenances of sincere penitents after confession, because it mainly springs from the assurance of pardon of sin, which you have not experienced, yet there are other minor sources of consolation, of the nature of which you can judge.

Our constant spiritual intercourse with our confessor provides us with a holy, learned, experienced friend, to whom we can unfold the most secret recesses of our heart. Think of some one pre-eminently pious clergyman of your church, learned, gifted, living above the world, fervent in spirit, devoting his whole life to the service of his ministry, ever ready with something applicable to say "to him that is weary," prudent and wise in giving counsel, meek and gentle in reproving, simple and clear in teaching, powerful in word and doctrine; then imagine how great an advantage it would be to have such an one for an intimate friend. Or imagine him appointed in some way to be your constant guide and director; fancy that he sat like an elder at the gate of your city, to be ever ready to attend to your application; imagine that he was bound by the most sacred oaths never to reveal, even by manner, any secret you might confide to him. That the same bond of secresy forbade him to notice what you had confided to him, even to yourself, when not in his seat of judgment, to make any reference to it, or to betray to you that he knew it by any action or circumstance. Such an one has every child of the Roman Catholic Church in his confessor. Think when years had accustomed you regularly to communicate to him every working and trial of your heart, how it would grow into a second nature to lean upon one so wise and holy, for support, for strength, for direction. Think how you would learn to rely upon him for your safety in danger, for consolation in sorrow, for wisdom in all important undertakings, for instruction in all the smaller concerns of your daily life. In addition to this, how would your confidence be established in him, if you knew this friend was appointed by Christ to be all this to you. That he stood in the place to you of the earthly presence of Christ. This a Roman Catholic knows to be the truth; he knows his confessor was given him to be a father, by Jesus, in fulfilment of the promise that he would not leave the children of his spouse the church, "orphans" or "comfortless," but would send the Spirit of Truth to be their "comforter." The promise was ratified, and in part fulfilled, when the divine breath passed from the glorified body of Jesus, "late that same day, the first day of the week." "Breathing on them," he said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost:" "whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them: and whose sins ye shall retain, they are retained." Thus constituting his Priesthood fathers through whom we were to receive the Spirit of grace and consolation to the end of time.

You can thus understand what confidence we must have in our confessor. How greatly it must relieve our mind from anxiety to be able to trust in such a friend.

How much of Christ's loving-kindness is, therefore, hidden away from those who are deprived of confession, who know not these holy fathers, dispensing to us a father's love! The same divine hand which created the natural affection of a parent's bosom, modelled from it the tenderness which a confessor has for his penitent, as a parent adapts his cares to the necessities of his offspring, so does a confessor adapt his treatment to the necessities of his penitent. His relation to us partakes of that of an earthly and a heavenly parent. He feels for us as an earthly parent; he judges us, and decides in the place he holds as delegated by God, to pardon or retain our sins.

How much of Christ's loving-kindness is hidden away from those who know not these holy friends, left to us by Him to cheer our pilgrim wanderings in a lone and homeless world. To stand by us in desolation, when that world turns coldly from us.

Jesus gave these holy guides to trace us out a pathway among the stranger mountains, over which we

must, without them, so wearily pass, to reach our Father's kingdom.

Where can the child of the Church of England seek such a friend? Especially the daughters of that church? Alas! no where. Her church abandons her. That creature born to suffer—woman—whom "grief must nurture for the sky," her whose "lot" it must be——

> "Silent tears to weep,
> And patient smiles to wear through suffering's hour,
> And sumless riches, from affection's deep
> To pour on broken reeds a wasted shower."

Her church abandons her. She must bear her heart's anguish alone. She has been told in her hour of happiness that religion will console her in sorrow. Her hour of suffering is come, and where must she turn to seek support and solace. She turns to her books, to her Bible, but she is alone in her despair; for her there is no physician to choose a remedy for her, suitable to her; "weeping she hath wept in the night, and her tears are on her cheek," and her eye is dim therewith, and she cannot seek it for herself. She speaks, and God answers her not by Urim or by Thummim, because he has appointed a voice to answer; but it is within the shepherd's fold, and she is placed without that fold by a cruel enemy, and the shepherd's voice cannot reach her.

How different with the daughter of the Church of Rome! she has her friend, her holy, heavenly friend ever ready to receive her; the portals of *her* church stand ever open. Here she may come as to a healing fountain, whose waters ever flow, here she may lave her burning brow, and drink of the cooling stream to allay the feverish anguish of her woe. Here she will be comforted "as one whom his mother comforts." Jesus, that dearest of friends, has spoken to her by the mouth of Him to whom His sacred breathing has been communicated, and by which he has received the power to "comfort those who mourn."

[*To be continued.*]

A FIELD FLOWER.

THERE is a flower, a little flower,
With silver crest and golden eye,
That welcomes every changing hour,
And weathers every sky.

The prouder beauties of the field
In gay but quick succession shine,
Race after race their honours yield,
They flourish and decline.

But this small flower, to nature dear,
While moons and stars their courses run,
Wreathes the whole circle of the year,
Companion of the sun.

It smiles upon the lap of May,
To sultry August spreads its charms,
Lights pale October on his way,
And twines December's arms.

The purple heath, and golden broom,
On moory mountains catch the gale,
O'er lawns the lily sheds perfume,
The violet in the vale;

But this bold floweret climbs the hill,
Hides in the forests, haunts the glen,
Plays on the margin of the rill,
Peeps round the fox's den.

Within the garden's cultured round
It shares the sweet carnation's bed;
And blooms on consecrated ground
In honour of the dead.

The lambkin crops its crimson gem,
The wild-bee murmurs on its breast,
The blue-fly bends its pensive stem,
That decks the sky-lark's nest.

'Tis FLORA'S page:—in every place,
In every season, fresh and fair,
It opens with perennial grace,
And blossoms every-where.

On waste and woodland, rock and plain,
Its humble buds unheeded rise;
The Rose has but a summer-reign,
The DAISY never dies.

Montgomery.

A PASSAGE FROM A LEGEND OF THE SUBJUGATION OF SPAIN.

BY WASHINGTON IRVING.

WHILE the veteran Taric was making his wide circuit through the land, an expedition under Magued, the renegado, proceeded against the city of Cordova. The inhabitants of that ancient place had beheld the great army of Don Roderick spreading like an inundation over the plain of the Guadalquiver, and had felt confident that it must sweep the infidel invaders from the land. What then was their dismay, when scattered fugitives, wild with horror and affright, brought them tidings of the entire overthrow of that mighty host, and the disappearance of the king? In the midst of their consternation, the Gothic noble, Pelistes, arrived at their gates, haggard with fatigue of body and anguish of mind, and leading a remnant of his devoted cavaliers, who had survived the dreadful battle of the Guadalete. The people of Cordova knew the valiant and steadfast spirit of Pelistes, and rallied round him as a last hope. "Roderick is fallen," cried they, "and we have neither king nor captain: be unto us a sovereign; take command of our city, and protect us in this hour of peril!"

The heart of Pelistes was free from ambition, and was too much broken by grief to be flattered by the offer of command; but he felt above every thing for the woes of his country, and was ready to assume any desperate service in her cause. "Your city," said he, "is surrounded by walls and towers, and may yet check the progress of the foe. Promise to stand by me to the last, and I will undertake your defence." The inhabitants all promised implicit obedience and devoted zeal: for what will not the inhabitants of a wealthy city promise and profess in a moment of alarm? The instant, however, that they heard of the approach of the Moslem troops, the wealthier citizens packed up their effects and fled to the mountains, or to the distant city of Toledo. Even the monks collected the riches of their convents and churches, and fled. Pelistes, though he saw

himself thus deserted by those who had the greatest interest in the safety of the city, yet determined not to abandon its defence. He had still his faithful though scanty band of cavaliers, and a number of fugitives of the army; in all amounting to about four hundred men. He stationed guards, therefore, at the gates and in the towers, and made every preparation for a desperate resistance. In the mean time, the army of Moslems and apostate Christians advanced, under the command of the Greek renegado, Magued, and guided by the traitor Julian. While they were yet at some distance from the city, their scouts brought to them a shepherd, whom they had surprised on the banks of the Guadalquiver. The trembling hind was an inhabitant of Cordova, and revealed to them the state of the place, and the weakness of its garrison.

"And the walls and gates," said Magued, "are they strong and well guarded?" "The walls are high and of wondrous strength," replied the shepherd; "and soldiers hold watch at the gates by day and night. But there is one place where the city may be secretly entered. In a part of the wall, not far from the bridge, the battlements are broken, and there is a breach at some height from the ground. Hard by stands a fig-tree, by the aid of which the wall may easily be scaled." Having received this information, Magued halted with his army, and sent forward several renegado Christians, partizans of Count Julian, who entered Cordova as if flying before the enemy. On a dark and tempestuous night, the Moslems approached to the end of the bridge which crosses the Guadalquiver, and remained in ambush. Magued took a small party of chosen men, and guided by the shepherd, forded the stream, and groped silently along the wall to the place where stood the fig-tree. The traitors, who had fraudulently entered the city, were ready on the wall to render assistance. Magued ordered his followers to make use of the long folds of their turbans instead of cords, and succeeded without difficulty in clambering into the breach. Drawing their scimitars, they now hastened to the gate which opened towards the bridge; the guards, suspecting no assault from within, were taken by surprise, and easily overpowered; the gate was thrown open, and the army that had remained in ambush rushed over the bridge, and entered without opposition.

The alarm had by this time spread throughout the city; but already a torrent of armed men was pouring through the streets. Pelistes sallied forth with his cavaliers and such of the soldiery as he could collect, and endeavoured to repel the foe; but every effort was in vain. The Christians were slowly driven from street to street, and square to square, disputing every inch of ground; until, finding another body of the enemy approaching to attack them in the rear, they took refuge in a convent, and succeeded in throwing to and barring the ponderous doors. The Moors attempted to force the gates, but were assailed with such showers of missiles from the windows and battlements, that they were obliged to retire. Pelistes examined the convent, and found it admirably calculated for defence. It was of great extent, with spacious courts and cloisters. The gates were massive, and secured with bolts and bars; the walls were of great thickness; the windows high and grated: there was a great tank or cistern of water, and the friars, who had fled from the city, had left behind a good supply of provisions. Here, then, Pelistes proposed to make a stand, and to endeavour to hold out until succour should arrive from some other city. His proposition was received with shouts by his loyal cavaliers; not one of whom but was ready to lay down his life in the service of his commander.

For three long and anxious months did the good knight Pelistes and his cavaliers defend their sacred asylum against the repeated assaults of the infidels. The standard of the true faith was constantly displayed from the loftiest tower, and a fire blazed there throughout the night, as a signal of distress to the surrounding country. The watchman from his turret kept a wary look out over the land, hoping in every cloud of dust to descry the glittering helms of Christian warriors. The country, however, was forlorn and abandoned, or if perchance a human being was perceived, it was some Arab horseman, careering the plain of the Guadalquiver as fearlessly as if it were his native desert. By degrees the provisions of the convent were consumed, and the cavaliers had to slay their horses, one by one, for food. They suffered the wasting miseries of famine without a murmur, and always met their commander with a smile. Pelistes, however, read their sufferings in their wan and emaciated countenances, and felt more for them than for himself. He was grieved at heart that such loyalty and valour should only lead to slavery or death, and resolved to make one desperate attempt for their deliverance. Assembling them one day in the court of the convent, he disclosed to them his purpose. "Comrades and brothers in arms," said he, "it is needless to conceal danger from brave men. Our case is desperate: our countrymen either know not or heed not our situation, or have not the means to help us. There is but one chance of escape; it is full of peril, and, as your leader, I claim the right to brave it. To-morrow at break of day I will sally forth and make for the city gates at the moment of their being opened; no one will suspect a solitary horseman; I shall be taken for one of those recreant Christians who have basely mingled with the enemy. If I succeed in getting out of the city, I will hasten to Toledo for assistance. In all events I shall be back in less than twenty days. Keep a vigilant look out toward the nearest mountain. If you behold five lights blazing upon its summit, be assured I am at hand with succour, and prepare yourselves to sally forth upon the city as I attack the gates. Should I fail in obtaining aid, I will return to die with you." When he had finished, his warriors would fain have severally undertaken the enterprise, and they remonstrated against his exposing himself to such peril; but he was not to be shaken from his purpose. On the following morning, ere the break of day, his horse was led forth, caparisoned, into the court of the convent, and Pelistes appeared in complete armour. Assembling his cavaliers in the chapel, he prayed with them for some time before the altar of the holy Virgin. Then rising, and standing in the midst of them, "God knows, my companions," said he, "whether we have any longer a country; if not, better were we in our graves. Loyal and true have ye been to me, and loyal have ye been to my son, even to the hour of his death; and grieved am I that I have no other means of proving my love for you, than by adventuring my worthless life for your deliverance. All I ask of you before I go, is a solemn promise to defend yourselves to the last like brave men and Christian cavaliers, and never to renounce your faith, or throw yourselves on the mercy of the renegado Magued, or the traitor Julian." They all pledged their words, and took a solemn oath to the same effect before the altar.

Pelistes then embraced them one by one, and gave them his benediction, and as he did so his heart yearned over them, for he felt towards them, not merely as a companion in arms and as a commoner, but as a father; and he took leave of them as if he had been going to his death. The warriors, on their part, crowded round him in silence, kissing his hands and the hem of his surcoat, and many of the sternest shed tears.

The grey of the dawning had just streaked the east, when Pelistes took lance in hand, hung his shield about his neck, and,

mounting his steed, issued quietly forth from a postern of the convent. He paced slowly through the vacant streets, and the tramp of his steed echoed afar in that silent hour; but no one suspected a warrior, moving thus singly and tranquilly in an armed city, to be an enemy. He arrived at the gate just at the hour of opening; a foraging party was entering with cattle and with beasts of burthen, and he passed unheeded through the throng. As soon as he was out of sight of the soldiers who guarded the gate, he quickened his pace, and at length, galloping at full speed, succeeded in gaining the mountains. Here he paused, and alighted at a solitary farm-house to breathe his panting steed; but had scarce put foot to ground when he heard the distant sound of pursuit, and beheld a horseman spurring up the mountain. Throwing himself again upon his steed, he abandoned the road, and galloped across the rugged heights. The deep dry channel of a torrent checked his career, and his horse, stumbling upon the margin, rolled with his rider to the bottom. Pelistes was sorely bruised by the fall, and his whole visage was bathed in blood. His horse, too, was maimed and unable to stand, so that there was no hope of escape. The enemy drew near, and proved to be no other than Magued, the renegado general, who had perceived him as he issued forth from the city, and had followed singly in pursuit. "Well met, senor alcayde!" exclaimed he, "and overtaken in good time. Surrender yourself my prisoner." Pelistes made no other reply than by drawing his sword, bracing his shield, and preparing for defence. Magued, though an apostate, and a fierce warrior, possessed some sparks of knightly magnanimity. Seeing his adversary dismounted, he disdained to take him at a disadvantage, but alighting, tied his horse to a tree.

The conflict that ensued was desperate and doubtful, for seldom had two warriors met so well matched or of equal prowess. Their shields were hacked to pieces, the ground was strewed with fragments of their armour, and stained with their blood. They paused repeatedly to take breath; regarding each other with wonder and admiration. Pelistes, however, had been previously injured by his fall, and fought to great disadvantage. The renegado perceived it, and sought not to slay him, but to take him alive. Shifting his ground continually, he wearied his antagonist, who was growing weaker and weaker from the loss of blood. At length Pelistes seemed to summon up all his remaining strength to make a signal blow, it was skilfully parried and he fell prostrate upon the ground. The renegado ran up, and putting his foot upon his sword, and the point of his scimitar to his throat, called upon him to ask his life; but Pelistes lay without sense, and as one dead. Magued then unlaced the helmet of his vanquished enemy, and seated himself on a rock beside him, to recover breath. In this situation the warriors were found by certain Moorish cavaliers, who marvelled much at the traces of that stern and bloody combat. Finding there was yet life in the Christian knight, they laid him upon one of their horses, and aiding Magued to remount his steed, proceeded slowly to the city. As the convoy passed by the convent, the cavaliers looked forth, and beheld their commander borne along bleeding and a captive. Furious at the sight, they sallied forth to the rescue, but were repulsed by a superior force, and driven back to the great portals of the church. The enemy entered pell mell with them, fighting from aisle to aisle, from altar to altar, and in the courts and cloisters of the convent. The greater part of the cavaliers died bravely, sword in hand, the rest were disabled with wounds and made prisoners. The convent, which was lately their castle, was now made their prison, and in after times, in commemoration of this event, was consecrated by the name of St. George of the Captives.

The loyalty and the prowess of the good knight Pelistes had gained him the reverence even of his enemies. He was for a long time disabled by his wounds, during which he was kindly treated by the Arab chieftains, who strove by every courteous means to cheer his sadness and make him forget that he was a captive. When he was recovered from his wounds they gave him a magnificent banquet to testify their admiration of his virtues. Pelistes appeared at the banquet clad in sable armour, and with a countenance pale and dejected; for the ills of his country evermore preyed upon his heart. Among the assembled guests was Count Julian, who held a high command in the Moslem army, and was arrayed in garments of mingled Christian and Morisco fashion. Pelistes had been a close and bosom friend of Julian in former times, and had served with him in the wars in Africa; but when the count advanced to accost him with his wonted amity, he turned away in silence, and deigned not to notice him; neither during the whole of the repast did he address to him ever a word, but treated him as one unknown.

When the banquet was nearly at a close, the discourse turned upon the events of the war; and the Moslem chieftains, in great courtesy, dwelt upon the merits of many of the Christian cavaliers, who had fallen in battle, and all extolled the valour of those who had recently perished in the defence of the convent. Pelistes remained silent for a time, and checked the grief which swelled within his bosom as he thought of his devoted cavaliers. At length, lifting up his voice, "Happy are the dead," said he, "for they rest in peace, and are gone to receive the reward of their piety and valour! I could mourn over the loss of my companions in arms, but they have fallen with honour, and are spared the wretchedness I feel in witnessing the thraldom of my country. I have seen my only son, the pride and hope of my age, cut down at my side; I have beheld kindred friends and followers falling one by one around me, and have become so seasoned to those losses that I have ceased to weep. Yet there is one man over whose loss I will never cease to grieve. He was the loved companion of my youth, and the steadfast associate of my graver years. He was one of the most loyal of Christian knights. As a friend he was loving and sincere; as a warrior his achievements were above all praise. What has become of him, alas! I know not. If fallen in battle, and I knew where his bones were laid, whether bleaching on the plains of Xeres, or buried in the waters of the Guadalete, I would seek them out and enshrine them as the relics of a sainted patriot. Or if, like many of his companions in arms, he should be driven to wander in foreign lands, I would join him in his hapless exile, and we would mourn together over the desolation of our country!"

Even the hearts of the Arab warriors were touched by the lament of the good Pelistes, and they said, "Who was this peerless friend, in whose praise thou art so fervent?"

"His name," replied Pelistes, "was Count Julian!"

The Moslem warriors stared with surprise. "Noble cavalier," exclaimed they, "has grief disordered thy senses? Behold thy friend, living and standing before thee, and yet thou dost not know him! This, this is Count Julian!"

Upon this, Pelistes turned his eyes upon the count, and regarded him for a time with a lofty and stern demeanour; and the countenance of Julian darkened, and was troubled, and his eye sank beneath the regard of that loyal and honourable cavalier. And Pelistes said, "In the name of God, I charge thee, man unknown! to answer. Dost thou presume to call thyself Count Julian!"

The Count reddened with anger at these words. "Pelistes," said he, "what means this mockery? Thou knowest me well; thou knowest me for Count Julian!"

"I know thee for a base impostor!" cried Pelistes. "Count Julian was a noble Gothic knight; but thou appearest in mongrel Moorish garb. Count Julian was a Christian, faithful and devout; but I behold in thee a renegado and an infidel. Count Julian was ever loyal to his king, and foremost in his country's cause: were he living, he would be the first to put shield on neck and lance in rest, to clear the land of her invaders: but thou art a hoary traitor! thy hands are stained with the royal blood of the Goths, and thou hast betrayed thy country and thy God. Therefore, I again repeat, man unknown! if thou sayest thou art Count Julian, thou liest! My friend, alas! is dead; and thou art some fiend from hell, which has taken possession of his body to dishonour his memory and render him an abhorrence among men!" So saying, Pelistes turned his back upon the traitor, and went forth from the banquet; leaving Count Julian overwhelmed with confusion, and an object of scorn to all the Moslem cavaliers.

THE ANT.

Turn on the prudent ant thy heedful eyes,
Observe her labours, sluggard, and be wise:
No stern command, no monitory voice,
Prescribes her duties, or directs her choice;
Yet timely provident, she hastes away,
To snatch the blessings of a plenteous day.
When fruitful summer loads the teeming plain,
She crops the harvest, and she stores the grain.

Dr. Johnson.

DIVING AND PEARL FISHING.

I remember, upon one occasion, that as we sat after dinner discussing the merits of the Yáqui war, our host introduced the subject of diving for pearls, an occupation carried on solely by the tribe now under arms. He was speaking of an extraordinary man, whom he had formerly known, the son of an Englishman, and his mother a Yáqui, who had invented a way of descending into the ocean, where he could remain for a length of time, *hear a conversation above water*, and rise to the surface, when called, without the aid of a diving-bell, but with merely a leathern bag containing *certain herbs, which furnished an atmosphere for respiration*, inclosing his head, and tied under the arms: he had likewise stone weights to keep him at the bottom. With this apparatus he could walk about the bottom of the sea, without the slightest inconvenience, and with the perfect use of his mental and physicial faculties. He stated that the fact was well known, and had been attested by certificates from the Jesuits who witnessed the *extraordinary* operation of the invention, and who had offered him two thousand dollars to disclose it. His reply, whenever a proposal of this sort was made to him, was, "If you will send *me* to Spain, and present *me* to his majesty, I will then make the disclosure to him in the presence of his whole court, and I shall be sure that the king will acknowledge me as the author of the discovery, and will recompense me accordingly." Don Antonio added, that he was a sad drunken fellow; and having ultimately died, the secret descended with him into the grave.

If it be difficult to learn to swim, it is infinitely more so to dive. In my first attempts I could only descend about six feet, and was immediately obliged to rise again to the surface, but by degrees I got down to three or four fathoms; at which depth the pressure of the water upon the ears is so great, that I can only compare it to a sharp-pointed iron instrument being violently forced into that organ. My stay under water, therefore, at this depth, was extremely short; but as I had been assured, that so soon as the ears should burst, as it is technically called by the divers, there would be no difficulty in descending to any depth; and wishing to become an accomplished diver, I determined to brave the excessive pain, till the bursting should, as it were, liberate me from a kind of cord which limited my range downwards, in the same way that the ropes of a balloon confine the progress of that machine upwards.

Accordingly, taking a leap from the bows of the boat, full of hope and resolution, with my fingers knit together over my head, the elbows straight, and keeping myself steadily in the inverse order of nature, namely, with my feet perpendicularly upwards, the impetus carried me down about four fathoms when it became necessary to assist the descent by means of the hands and legs; but alas! who can count upon the firmness of his resolution? The change of temperature from warm to cold is most sensibly felt. Every fathom fills the imagination with some new idea of the dangerous folly of penetrating farther into the silent dominions of reckless monsters, where the skulls of the dead make perpetual grimaces, and the yawning jaws of sharks and tinteréros, or the death-embrace of the manta, lie in wait for us. These impressions were augmented by the impossibility of the vision penetrating the twilight by which I was surrounded, together with the excruciating pain that I felt in my ears and eyes; in short, my mind being assailed by a thousand incomprehensible images, I ceased striking with my hands and legs; I felt myself receding from the bottom; the delightful thought of once more beholding the blue heavens above me got the better of every other reflection; I involuntarily changed the position of my body, and, in the next instant, found myself once more on the surface. How did my bosom inflate with the rapid inspirations of my natural atmosphere, and a sensation of indescribable pleasure spread over every part of the body, as though the spirit was rejoicing at its liberation from its watery peril!

In fact, it was a new sensation which I cannot describe. I did not suffer it, however, to be of long duration—once more I essayed with a more fixed determination. Again I felt myself gliding through the slippery water, which, from its density, gave one the idea of swimming through a thick jelly; again I experienced the same change of temperature in the water as I descended; and again the agonizing sensation in my ears and eyes made me waver. But now, reason and resolution urged me on, although every instant the pain increased as I descended: and at the depth of six or seven fathoms, I felt a sensation in my ears like that produced by the explosion of a gun; at the same moment I lost all sense of pain, and afterwards reached the bottom, which I explored with a facility which I thought unattainable. Unfortunately, I met with no oysters to repay me for my perseverance; and as I found myself exhausted for want of air, I seized hold of a stone to prove that I had reached the bottom at *eight* fathoms water, and rose to the top with a triumph as great as if I had obtained a treasure.

I no sooner found myself on the surface than I became sensible of what had happened to my ears, eyes, and mouth: I was literally bleeding from each of these, though wholly unconscious of it. But now was the greatest danger in diving, as the sharks, mantas, and tinteréros, have an astonishingly quick scent for blood. However I was too much pleased with my success to attend to the advice of the diver, and I continued the practice till I had collected a considerable number of shells, out of which I hoped to reap a rich harvest. But although constancy has a great deal to do with success, it will not command

it! Six very small pearls were all that the large number of shells produced, although many of the oysters were large, and evidently of considerable age; but, like myself, they were "quite old enough to be better."

The oyster secures itself so firmly to the rocks by its beard that it requires no little force to tear it away; and, as its external surface is full of sharp points, the hands are soon severely cut by them. The effect of the buoyancy of the water is also curious. At the depth of seven or eight fathoms it requires exertion to keep down; and if you then attempt to lay hold on a rock with the hands, you find yourself, as it were, *suspended*, so that if you let go your hold you will immediately *tumble upwards!* I remember, the first oyster I ever met with was at the depth of four fathoms only; my head was almost touching it; and forgetting, in my pleasure, to strike out my legs, as I stretched forward my hand to catch hold of the prize, to my astonishment the oyster slipped from my grasp, and I found myself nearly at the surface of the water the next instant, so that I had all my labour for nothing.

So firmly does the oyster fix himself to the rock, that, in order to tear him away, it is necessary to get "a purchase" upon him, by placing the feet upon the bottom. The excessive difficulty of doing this is incredible; it requires the muscular strength of the whole body to overcome the resistance of the water's buoyancy. I have no doubt that, by means of its long beard, the oyster has the power of locomotion, and that it changes its situation according to its pleasure or convenience. —*From Lieutenant Hardy's Travels in the Interior of Mexico.*

SOME ACCOUNT
OF
CHARLES WATERTON, Esq.

Author of Essays on Natural History, and Wanderings in South America, by Himself.

[Continued from page 155.]

I was now at the height of my ambition. I followed up my calling with great success. The vermin disappeared by the dozen; the books were moderately well thumbed; and, according to my notion of things, all went on perfectly right.

After leaving this "safe retreat of health and peace," I journeyed homewards to join my father; and I spent a year with him; and, as my mother was very anxious that I should see the world, they took advantage of the short peace of Amiens, and sent me to Spain.

Two of my maternal uncles, who had received brilliant educations, and were endowed with great parts, but who were not considered worthy to serve their country in any genteel or confidential capacity, unless they would apostatize from the faith of their ancestors, had deemed it prudent to leave their native land, and retire to foreign climes. They went to Malaga, where they finally settled, and became naturalised Spaniards.

My uncles had a pleasant country-house at the foot of the adjacent mountains, and many were the days of rural amusement which I passed at it. The red-legged partridges abounded in the environs, and the vultures were remarkably large; whilst goldfinches appeared to be much more common than sparrows in this country. During the spring, the quails and bee-eaters arrived in vast numbers, from the opposite coast of Africa. Once when I was rambling on the sea-shore, a flock of a dozen red flamingoes passed nearly within gun-shot of me.

More than a year of my life had now passed away in Malaga and its vicinity, without misfortune, without care, and without annoyance of any kind. The climate was delicious; and I felt regret in making preparations to leave this old Moorish town on a trip to Malta. But the Spanish proverb informs us, that man proposes, and God disposes: "El hombre pone, y Dios dispone." Many a bright and glorious morning ends in a gloomy setting sun.

There began to be reports spread up and down the city that the black vomit had made its appearance; and every succeeding day brought testimony that things were not as they ought to be. I myself, in an alley near my uncle's house, saw a mattress of most suspicious appearance hung out to dry. A Maltese captain, who had dined with us in good health at one o'clock, lay dead in his cabin before sunrise the next morning. A few days after this, I was seized with vomiting and fever during the night. I had the most dreadful spasms, and it was supposed that I could not last out till noon the next day. However, strength of constitution got me through it.

I now began to think it high time to fly. I was acquainted with a Swedish captain, by name Bolin; a most excellent man, and of surprising intrepidity and coolness. His brig having been long laden with fruit for London, he was anxious to depart; and he formed a plan to escape from the harbour.

Our captain had taken the precaution to make out false papers, in case of need, on account of the war betwixt Great Britain and France. My brother was entered as a passenger, myself as a Swedish carpenter. We slept on board for many successive nights, in hopes of a fair wind to carry us through the Straits. At last a real east wind did come, and it blew with great violence. The captain, whose foresight and precautions were truly admirable, had given the strictest orders to the crew that not a word should be spoken whilst we were preparing to escape. We lay in close tier amongst forty sail of merchantmen. The harbour-master, having come his usual rounds, and found all right, passed on without making any observations. At one o'clock, post meridiem, just as the governor had gone to the eastward to take an airing in his carriage, as was his custom every day; and the boats of two Spanish brigs of war at anchor in the harbour had landed their officers for the afternoon's amusements, our vessel worked out clear of the rest, and instantly became a cloud of canvass. The captain's countenance, which was very manly, exhibited a portrait of cool intrepidity rarely seen: had I possessed the power, I would have made him an admiral on the spot. The vessel drove through the surge with such a press of sail, that I expected every moment to see her topmasts carried away. Long before the brigs of war had got their officers on board, and had weighed in chase of us, we were far at sea; and when night had set in, we lost sight of them for ever; our vessel passing Gibraltar at the rate of nearly eleven knots an hour.

The wind headed us the following night. After thirty days of cold and stormy weather we ran the risk of follow-

ing a fishing boat, for want of a pilot, and anchored off Brownsea Castle, near Poole, in Dorsetshire; an adverse wind not permitting us to proceed up Channel. Here we sent our papers, and Consul Laird's certificate, up to London. Contrary to my expectations, we received permission, in due time, to proceed up the Thames. I had often told Captain Bolin, during the voyage, that we should be sent back to the Mediterranean for a regular bill of health; but he thought otherwise, and he was right.

The pestilence at Malaga had shaken me considerably. Being but thinly clad, in coming up the Channel I caught a cold, which attacked the lungs, and reduced me to the brink of the grave. I must have sunk, had it not been for the skill of the late celebrated surgeon, Mr. Hey of Leeds: he set me on my legs again; and I again hunted with Lord Darlington. But the bleak and wintry wind of England ill suited a frame naturally chilly, and injured by what had already happened, I longed to bask in a warmer sun.

My paternal uncle having estates in Demerara, and my father having lately made a purchase there, for the benefit of his younger children, I petitioned to be allowed to go out and superintend them; seeing that there was no chance of travelling with comfort in Europe, on account of the war, which had all the appearance of becoming general.

I sailed from Portsmouth in the ship Fame, Captain Brand, on November 29, 1804, and landed at the town of Stabroek, in *ci-devant* Dutch Guiana, after a passage of about six weeks. I liked the country uncommonly, and administered to the estates till 1812; coming home at intervals, agreeably to the excellent and necessary advice which I had received from Sir Joseph Banks. In the month of April, 1812, my father and uncle being dead, I delivered over the estates to those concerned in them, and never more put foot upon them.

In my subsequent visits to Guiana, having no other object in view than that of natural history, I merely stayed a day or two in the town of Stabroek (now called George Town), to procure what necessaries I wanted; and then I hastened up into the forests of the interior, as the *Wanderings* will show.

Notwithstanding the most guarded sobriety and abstinence on my part, the fever and ague would at times assault me with great obstinacy. The attacks could always be traced to my getting wet, and remaining in my wet clothes until the sun had dried them; a custom never to be sufficiently condemned in any country.

When the ague came on to any serious extent, I would go up to Mr. Edmonstone's house, in Mibiri Creek, for change of air. He was the most valued friend I ever had in the world; and I seldom failed to recover my health during the time that I remained with him.

I had returned from the interior broken down with sickness, brought on by being reduced to eat unwholesome food, and by being exposed day and night to the inclemency of the rainy season. The doctors having ordered me to England without loss of time, I took my passage on board the Fame of Liverpool, Captain Williams.

The voyage to Europe did not recruit my health. When I had landed in Liverpool, I was unable to proceed to London with the despatches; so I sent them by the mail, and wrote a letter of apology to Lord Bathurst. His lordship returned a very kind answer, and requested that I would repair to London when I had got better of the tertian ague, as he wished me to explore Madagascar.

When I had rallied a little, I proceeded to London, and waited on him. He told me that I should have to explore the interior of Madagascar; with permission to visit Monomotapa, and the Sechelles Islands, &c.; and that a man-of-war would take me out early in October following. This was in the month of May, 1813. The ague still annoying me cruelly, I wrote to Lord Bathurst, and begged to resign the commission.

Since the year 1825, I have not been in the transatlantic forests, but have merely sauntered from time to time in Belgium, in Holland, and in Germany. I was in Belgium during the revolution for real liberty in religious matters; and I wrote a paper for the *Examiner*, in which I predicted that the game would shortly be up for ever with the Dutch flag. I went into the large square at Bruges to see the Belgians engage their enemies. As the balls whistled on all sides, I thought I might as well live to see the row another day; so, observing a door half open, I felt much inclined to get under cover; but, just as I arrived at the threshold, a fat old dame shut the door full in my face. Thank you, old lady, said I. The reader, I fear, is now pretty well tired with these Memoirs. They will soon be concluded. He cannot fail to have discovered what has been my ruling propensity through life.

I am fully aware that certain statements in the *Wanderings* have procured me the honour of being thought nearly connected with the Munchausen family. Unenviable is the lot of him whose narratives are disbelieved merely for want of sufficient faith in him who reads them. If those who have called my veracity in question would only have the manliness to meet me, and point out any passage in the book which they consider contradictory or false, I would no longer complain of unfair treatment.

If they can show that I have deviated from the line of truth in one single solitary instance, I will consent to be called an impostor; and then may the *Wanderings* be trodden under foot, and be forgotten for ever.

Some of my encounters with wild beasts may appear hair-breadth escapes, and very alarming things, to readers at their own fireside; but to me, in the forest, they appeared not so.

We are told that death itself is not heeded when the battle rages. This I believe; for, when honour, fame or duty, urge a determined man forwards, I apprehend that he knows not what it is to fear. Thus, the soldier marches boldly on, even to the cannon's mouth; the fox-hunter, in conscious pride, flies over the five-barred gate; and half way down Dover's cliff "hangs one that gathers samphire." But, I ask, would a "pampered menial" storm the deadly breach? would a gouty alderman descend the rock of Ailsa, based by the roaring ocean, in quest of sea-fowl's eggs? No. Their habits, and their ailments, would disable or prevent them; and, probably, nothing could induce them to face the apparent danger. Now, as for myself, I was well fitted out

for adventures. I went expressly to look for wild beasts; and, having found them, it would have been impossible for me to have refrained from coming in actual contact with them.

So far for the *Wanderings*. Most part of the work was written in the depth of the forest, without the help of books, or the aid of any naturalist. I could not refrain from making a few observations on it ere I concluded these Memoirs—Memoirs by the way, from the pen of a private rover. Had our religion not interfered with our politics, my early days would probably have been spent in the service of my country. Then, no doubt, there would have been matter in these Memoirs much more interesting to the reader than that which is now submitted to his perusal.

I could never comprehend how a government, which professes to be the most tolerant of all governments in things appertaining to religion, should have visited millions of its subjects with the severest penalties, for two long centuries and a half, merely because they refused to abandon the creed of their ancestors. Neither can I comprehend how a government can have the consummate assurance to enforce payment to the church by law established, when it is a well-known fact in history (see the act of parliament 1st & 2nd of Mary, chap. 8.) that the very founders of this law-church did confess, in full and open parliament, that they had declined from the unity of Christ's church, and had a long while wandered and strayed abroad; and that they acknowledged their own errors, and declared themselves very sorry and repentant of the schism and disobedience committed by them in this realm against the See Apostolic. Again, can any thing be more unjust and despicable than the custom of preaching an annual sermon against us on the fifth of November? this year it fell on a Sunday; and, upon that sacred day, many were the persons who put charity behind the pulpit, and, then, in front of it, held up the bug-bear popery, in so terrific a point of view, that numbers of old women were nearly frightened into hysterics. However, I think I may venture to assure their reverences, that I, for one, will never use gunpowder in any unlawful way. I had much rather see them walk soberly along, and keep possession of their usurped pulpits for a *little* while longer, than hear of them being blown up sky-high by the unjustifiable application of prepared charcoal and saltpetre.

When I reflect that the faith of my ancestors has been most cruelly assailed for centuries, by every man in power, from the Prime Minister of England down to the county magistrate; when I see it rising again triumphant in every part of the empire; and when I observe multitudes, in every rank of life, returning to its consoling communion, I call to mind, with infinite delight, those beautiful verses of Dryden:—

"A milk-white hind, immortal and unchanged,
Fed on the lawns, and in the forests ranged.
Without unspotted, innocent within,
She fear'd no danger, for she knew no sin.
Yet had she oft been chased with horns and hounds,
And Scythian shafts, and many-winged wounds
Aim'd at her heart; was often forced to fly,
And doom'd to death, though fated not to die."

Here I terminate these Memoirs; and I put away the pen, not to be used again, except in self-defence. Thus a musician of old (tired no doubt with scraping) hung his fiddle on the wall, and said,—

"Barbiton, hic paries habebit."

CHARLES WATERTON.

From "Essays on Natural History," published by Longman and Co. —a work worthy of a place in every library.

THE BLESSING OF THE BEASTS AT ROME.

"I HAD long looked for the arrival of the day in which the Roman beasts of burden receive a public benediction. Notwithstanding the ridicule thrown upon this annual ceremony by many a thoughtless and censorious traveller, I had figured in my own mind a ceremony holy in itself, and of no small importance to the people at large. 'Benedicite, omnes bestiæ et pecora, Domino!' I conceived that the blessing would insure to these poor dumb animals a better treatment at the hands of man than they might otherwise receive; and the calling upon our kind Creator to give his benediction to a horse, which, by one false step, or an unruly movement, might endanger the life of its rider, appeared to me an act replete with Christian prudence. I recalled to my mind the incessant and horrible curses which our village urchins vent against their hauling horses on the banks of the Barnsley canal. This aqueous line of commerce passes close by my porter's lodges; and as the first lock is only a short distance from them, the horrid din of curses commences there, and is kept up by these young devils incarnate from week to week (Sundays not excepted) with the most perfect impunity. At last the day arrived on which the beasts of draught and burden were to receive a benediction from the hand of a priest at the door of St. Anthony's church. The sun shone brightly, and the scene was truly exhilirating. Every horse, and mule, and ass, was decked out in splendid colours, and in trappings corresponding with the means of their owners, whose faces bespoke the joy of their hearts, and whose orderly conduct at once proclaimed the religious feeling which had brought them to the place. When the animals had received the benediction, they passed onwards with their masters, to make room for those behind them; and this was the order of the day, until the last blessing upon the last animal brought the exhibition to a close. As this scene of primeval piety was going on, an English gentleman, with whom I had a slight acquaintance, and who was standing by my side, remarked that he was tired with looking at such a scene of superstitious folly. 'If it be folly,' said I, in answer to his remark, 'to give a blessing to an animal in one shape, it is certainly folly to pronounce a benediction upon an animal under another. And still we all do this in England, and in every other Christian country. Where is the well-regulated family which, on sitting down to a leg of boiled mutton and caper sauce, does not beg the blessing of Almighty God upon it, through the mouth of the master of the house, or by the ministry of a clergyman, if present? 'Benedicite, omnia opera Domini, Domino!' Who ever thinks of cutting up a young roasting-pig, immersed in delicious gravy, and hot from the kitchen, without asking a blessing on it?—'Bless us, O Lord, and these thy gifts!'"—*Waterton.*

The Diet of the Aged.—It is an erroneous idea, and contrary to nature's dictates, to believe that old people need additional sustenance. Were it true, we ought to have the appetite of the aged increase with their years; for Providence is kind as well as all-wise; but we know the contrary to be the fact—and the fact carries with it its own just inference—namely, that the appetite of the aged should not be forced.

AUTUMN.

Solemn are th' Autumnal signs
When the waning year declines,
And the frequent meteor shines:

Deeper tokens shall appear
When the winter shall be near
Bringing in the Eternal Year.

Heavily through land and main
Moans the dread prelusive strain
Of the rising hurricane:

But more terrible the tone
When Creation's self shall groan
As there comes the Judgment-throne.

Solemn is th' Autumnal pall
When the leaves in silence fall
Through the branching forest hall:

Darker gloom shall clothe the sky,
As that Season draweth nigh
When the stars shall fall from high.

When the sun is in eclipse,
Terror sits upon men's lips,
Till his light the forest tips:

Deeper fear through heart shall run,
When the dim expiring sun
Says that his long work is done.

When the palsied earth doth shake,
When terrestrial thunders wake,
Sons of men with terror quake:

Then shall universal space,
From its height unto its base,
Say the Judge doth leave His place.

Watchful wakes the eye and ear,
When the glowing Eastern sphere
Doth proclaim the Sun is near:

Hope and Fear shall listening stand,
When the moving sea and land
Shall proclaim the Judge at hand.

Midnight terror wakes from sleep,
When the mountain thunders leap
Like a stag from steep to steep:

Louder far the trump of doom
Shall re-echo through the gloom,
And declare the Judgment come.

Marvellous and passing strange
From dead midnight is the change
When the mid-day sun doth range:

But more wonderful the sight
When the everlasting light
Breaks upon this earthly night.

Wondrous is the gate of Even,
When through all the dark-blue Heaven
To our sight the stars are given:

But more solemn shall it be,
When around us we shall see
The celestial company.

* * * * *

Oft we feel the die is cast,
And a long expectance past,
And the Hour is come at last:

So in silence of the tomb
In a moment shall have come
The expected Day of doom.

Hearts almost to bursting swell
When they faintly syllable
To the dying sad farewell:

Sadder his adieu shall be
Who the loved—the bless'd—shall see
Parting for eternity.

Touching sad is music known,
When a deep heart-thrilling tone
Brings around us loved ones gone:

Sadder shall be that sweet sound,
If it breathes their path around
Who have left us prison bound.

THE BAPTISTERY.

Varieties.

The Great Value of Action.—So much only of life as I know by experience, so much of the wilderness have I vanquished and planted; or so far have I extended my being, my dominion. I do not see how any man can afford, for the sake of his nerves and his nap, to spare any action in which he can partake. It is pearls and rubies to his discourse. Drudgery, calamity, exasperation, want, are instruments in eloquence and wisdom. The true scholar grudges every opportunity of action past by, as a loss of power. It is the raw material, out of which the intellect moulds her splendid products. A strange process too, this, by which experience is converted into thought, as a mulberry leaf is converted into satin.

Cathedrals.—Who can enter the walls of such venerable edifices without his soul being inspired with the immediate presence of the Great Image of all, and having feelings of devotion—a holy awe and reverence kindled in his heart, his mind soothed and calmed—and without offering up adoration to that Great Being who is not confined to temples made with hands—has heaven for his throne, and earth for his footstool. Naturally disposed to indulge in silent contemplation, we reflect that we are in the temple of God, and at the gate of heaven, where the living are trained and instructed to seek after those spiritual blessings that never end. Viewing also the tomb-stones on which we tread, and monuments around, a voice whispers in the ear, "Dust thou art, and shall mingle with the earth, like those to whose memory they were erected."

Those who are most exalted above dependence or control, are yet condemned to pay so large a tribute of their time to custom, ceremony, and popularity, that, according to the Greek proverb, a man in the house is more a slave than the master.

Mexican Art.—The moment a stranger arrives in Mexico, he is besieged by a host of wax-figure makers, with small statues of the costumes and trades of the country. These, it is true, are cast in moulds, but the talent is not the less remarkable. They are admirably executed. Dress, feature, demeanour, action, are all caught and faithfully depicted to the very life, and no collection can be more worthily adorned than by a series of these figures. You can obtain them of any size, or any subject; and although the materials are frail, they may be safely transported from the capital to the coast. If these *statuettes* are wonderful, their makers are not less so. You would be astonished to see the artist, who produces a gem of a figure which in Europe would command a couple of doubloons. A little room up two pairs of rickety stairs, just large enough to turn in, where his wife cooks and sleeps, with two or three children in one corner; while he, with his lump of wax and his portable furnace, stands working, moulding, and dressing his figures in another. Such is the atelier, while the man himself is scarcely distinguishable from the commonest *léperos.*

Perseverance.—The more people do, the more they can do; he that does nothing renders himself incapable to do anything; whilst we are executing one work, we are preparing ourselves to undertake another.

Oblivion.—An indulgence which we extend to the injuries we have done to others, and the benefits which others have done to us.

The Common Lot.—For life in general there is but one decree; youth is a blunder; manhood a struggle; old age a regret.